

**AVOCA BOROUGH**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 8TH, 2021 – COUNCIL MEETING**

**MEETING MINUTES**

The regular monthly meeting of Avoca Borough Council was held on Thursday, April 8th, 2021 with Council Vice President, Frank Marriggi, presiding. The work session began at 6:30p.m. The regular monthly meeting was called to order at 6:40p.m. and Pledge of Allegiance was said by John Vols.

Council members in attendance: Mike Fuller, Stan Waleski, Gary Halagarda, Joe Satkowski, Bob Dommermuth, Sam Diaz, John Vols and Frank Marriggi. John Boone was absent.

Also in attendance: Mayor Robert Mullen, Atty. Matthew Boyd via phone, Engineer Paul Pasonick and Secretary Kelly O’Brien. Chief Dave Homschek was absent.

Motion by Joe Satkowski, second by John Vols to accept the minutes of the March 2021 Council meeting as presented: Voice Vote: Eight ( 8 ) YES

Motion by Stan Waleski, second by Mike Fuller to pay all bills presented with funds available. Voice Vote: Right ( 8 ) YES

Motion by Sam Diaz, second by Joe Satkowski to accept new correspondence as presented. Voice Vote: Eight ( 8 ) YES

Motion by Mike Fuller, second by Bob Dommermuth to accept the March 2021 police report prepared by Chief Homschek and read aloud by Mayor Mullen. Voice Vote: Eight ( 8 ) YES

Motion by Joe Satkowski, second by Bob Dommermuth to accept and enter into a new agreement with Pennsylvania Water Company in regard to property owner shut offs due to non payment of utilities. Voice Vote: Seven ( 7 ) YES, One ( 1 ) Abstain – Vols MOTION CARRIED

Motion by John Vols, second by Joe Satkowski to donate the requested amount of $1200 in financial assistance to the GPA Little League for the purchase of Dryel & Diamond Pro for the baseball fields. Roll Call Vote: Seven ( 7 ) YES, One ( 1 ) Abstain- Diaz MOTION CARRIED

Motion by Mike Fuller, second by Bob Dommermuth to enter into an agreement with Engie Resources for electric supply, at a fixed rate of 6.350 for 36 months. Voice Vote: Eight ( 8 ) YES

Motion by John Vols, second by Joe Satkowski to have “The Avoca Basketball League, sponsored by Avoca Borough” be changed, taking Avoca’s name off of the League & League Sponsorship when it reopens. Roll Call Vote: Four ( 4 ) YES – Vols, Satkowski, Dommermuth & Halagarda

Four ( 4 ) NO – Waleski, Fuller, Diaz & Marriggi

Upon this split vote, Mayor Mullen broke the tie, voting YES

MOTION CARRIED

Motion by Sam Diaz, second by Joe Satkowski to have the Borough Engineer look at the Grove Street parking issues and make recommendations. Voice Vote: Seven ( 7 ) YES, One ( 1 ) NO – Dommermuth MOTION CARRIED

Motion by Sam Diaz, second by John Vols to authorize Atty. Boyd to draft a letter to the Paradis family & Tigue family about new restrictions pertaining to parking in the current borough building parking lot. Voice Vote: Eight ( 8 ) YES

Engineers Report was prepared and presented by Paul Pasonick. See attached.

Police Report was prepared by Chief Homschek and read aloud by Mayor Mullen. See attached.

In other Borough matters:

John Vols addressed several issues. Mr. Vols voiced his opinion on having different restrictions for different borough owned/leased parking lots. His concern is if certain people are “grandfathered” in, and are allowed to park in one lot, what is to say that anyone else that has lived next to a borough parking lot would not want to then be allowed to park there at their leisure. He feels it gets too out of hand and then is difficult to regulate. If individuals are going to be allowed to park in the Borough building lot, he would like letters sent to those people stating that they must move all vehicles in snow emergencies or for any special events.

Mr. Vols spoke about the current parking lot in the 600 block of Main Street that the Borough is leasing. He feels the price we are paying is far too much for a handful of parking spots over a five year span. After a bit of discussion, John asked Atty. Boyd to look into what it would cost and what the repercussions would be for breaking the lease.

John said that he would like to see more activities and programs for children in town. He then brought up the Avoca Basketball League and stated that once it opens up again, he would like the name of Avoca removed from the Leagues name. The name implies Avoca Borough has affiliation with running the league and it does not. To that, Stan Waleski stated that it has been named the Avoca Basketball League for the past 25 years, and for the past 25 years he has donated his time to run the league, not personally profiting from it. After a bit of discussion, Mr. Vols made a motion to remove Avoca’s name from the leagues’ affiliation.

Stan Waleski updated Council with the latest information from the NorthEast Land Bank and Luzerne County free and clear tax sale happening in August 2021. He spoke of the LSA grant applications and advised Council that the LSA Committee is scheduled to meet again in May. Stanley also advised that the Compost Facility Committee has not yet met in 2021 yet, but the Compost facility is open and we can start taking material to it.

Gary Halagarda questioned one of the video cameras from the corner of the Borough building is missing and he would like to get it replaced or patched sooner than later. He feels the camera being there can be a great assist should any incident outside of the borough building occur.

Sam Diaz had several issues. He wanted to know who ordered the lawn cutting tractor, as he was under the impression that the purchase was supposed to be further discussed and how was he supposed to know if money was available. He then went on to demand he be provided with quarterly financial statements that can be cross referenced with the 2021 budget. Mrs. O’Brien followed up with trying to explain how the tractor was approved for purchase at the February 2021 Council meeting, the general account numbers were checked and it needed to be ordered by a certain time. Mr. Dommermuth asked if Mr. Boone was aware of the “order” and Mrs. O’Brien advised yes.

Ron Casper, an Avoca resident, questioned a few items. He asked why the Borough was applying for an LSA grant for a leased parking lot, that the Borough does not own. He then asked to be provided with a copy of the lease agreement. Mr. Casper questioned if the Borough receives rent from the Basketball League. Mr. Waleski advised the league pays $500 annually in rent. After some discussion, Mr. Casper stated that the Borough should receive a fair amount for rent and feels that $500 per year is way below what it should be, as that is not enough for even two months of heating during peak cold season.

Jon Alaimo addressed Council and stated that if the Borough is looking to save on electric we should look into shutting off a portion of the borough building parking lot lights during non business hours to help cut costs.

Motion by Sam Diaz, second by Bob Dommermmuth to adjourn meeting at 7:25p.m. Voice Vote: Eight ( 8 ) YES